

SUNDAY SCHOOLS RECOMMENDED

IN A

S E R M O N

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PREACHED AT THE PARISH CHURCH OF
ST. ALPHAGE, CANTERBURY,
ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER THE EIGHTEENTH, MDCCLXXXV.

BY GEORGE HORNE, D.D.
DEAN OF CANTERBURY
AND
PRESIDENT OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE OXFORD.

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WITH AN

A P P E N D I X

CONCERNING THE METHOD OF FORMING AND CONDUCTING
AN ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS KIND.

PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF A SUNDAY SCHOOL.

O X F O R D :

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E. D. R. M. O. N.

W. J. L. L. A. C. O. T. H. E. R. R. Y.

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T O
THE REVEREND M^r. HEARNE,
Rector of the united Parishes of ST. ALPHAGE and ST. MARY
NORTHGATE in the City of CANTERBURY.

REVEREND SIR,

THE following discourse can be addressed to no person so properly as to yourself. At your request it was delivered, with the sole view of farthering the pious and useful work, in which, with equal skill and diligence, you have led the way among us. The sight of so many well instructed and well behaved children, rescued by your care, and at your expence, from vice and ignorance, with the satisfaction produced by that sight, visible in the countenances of a crowded and attentive audience, afforded me a pleasure, the remembrance of which will never depart from my mind. The sermon is now submitted to the public, in the same plain and artless form in which it was at first composed and preached, having nothing to recommend it, but an honest zeal in a good cause. If it shall be a mean of promoting that cause, and encouraging others to make an experiment, which in so many instances has already succeeded, I shall deem you to have conferred a lasting obligation on

Reverend Sir,

Your faithful and

obedient servant,

GEORGE HORNE.

PSALM XXXIV. II.

COME, YE CHILDREN, HEARKEN UNTO ME: I WILL
TEACH YOU THE FEAR OF THE LORD.

IT is one mark of that wisdom by which the world is governed, that the assistance afforded is proportioned to the necessities of the times wherein such assistance is called for. When the darkness which covers a land becomes so thick as to make men despair of it's removal, light shall suddenly arise from an unexpected quarter; small, indeed, and scarce discernible, at first; but gently and gradually increasng, till the darkness vanishes, and the perfect day is formed. When corruption of one kind or other has in such a manner overspread the face of religion, that it's features are scarcely any longer to be distinguished, a reforming hand shall appear, to do away the soil contracted in a course of ages, and restore the picture to it's original beauty.

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IF

IF a preacher mentions *the iniquity of the age*, it is regarded by many as a sort of cant; as a necessary ingredient in the composition of a sermon; and we are asked, if we think nations have not been as bad formerly? Undoubtedly many have; for which reason, God destroyed them, and raised up others to supply their places. In the days of Noah, and in those of Lot, men were as wicked as they are now; they were more so; for a flood came upon them in one case, a storm of fire and brimstone in the other. And whenever we shall be altogether like them (which God forbid we ever should be) judgment, in some shape, will seize upon *us*. "The kingdom of God shall be taken from us, and given to a nation that will bring forth the fruits thereof." Such is the rule of heaven's proceedings, and it altereth not. We are not yet overthrown, because our measure is not yet filled up; but if we continue daily employed in filling it, that measure must in time be full.

THE matter is, however, of late "come home to our business and our bosoms." A lawless tribe of profligate, desperate, unfeeling villains have broken loose upon the public, to rob, to maim, and to murder; so that we can no longer travel with comfort upon the road,

road, or sleep with security in our beds. Numbers of these wretches are from time to time apprehended, and crowded together in prisons; from whence some come forth again to make fresh ravages in society, tenfold more the children of hell (if possible) than they went in; while others furnish out mournful and horrible executions of twenty or thirty at a time, to the astonishment of the kingdoms around us, and our own shame and confusion of face. How happens it, say foreigners to our countrymen, when upon their travels abroad — how happens it, that under a constitution, of which you boast, as the glory of the world, monthly scenes are exhibited, which would shock the minds of Turks and Tartars? This is a question more easily asked, than answered. The fact, alas, is certain; and even the public prints begin to exclaim, that there is no police amongst us, no remedy for these disorders; and, in short, that all is over.

BUT let us not by any means despair. This would only make bad worse. If we once bring ourselves to fancy that no remedy can be found, no remedy ever will be found; for none will ever be sought.

Dark as the prospect was, a ray of light has broken

in upon it, and that from an unexpected quarter. An institution has been set on foot by a private ^a individual, to the excellency of which every man who loves his country must rejoice to bear his testimony. From small beginnings it has increased and diffused itself in a wonderful manner; and if it be generally taken up through the kingdom, especially in the metropolis, with the same zeal and judgment which have been shewn in the management of it among you, the sagacity of the wisest cannot foresee how much good may in the end be done by it, and how far it may go towards saving a great people from impending ruin. At the moment in which I am speaking, not less than one hundred thousand pupils are said to be in training under its care. There may soon be ten times that number; and if it finally succeed with half these, five hundred thousand honest men and virtuous women, duly mingled in the mass of the community, will make a great alteration. In the case of good as well as bad, "a little leaven (and this can hardly be called a little) leaveneth the whole lump."

THE institution intended, as you all well know, is that of SUNDAY SCHOOLS, which seems to address

^a Mr. RAIKES of Gloucester.

itself

itself to the parties concerned, in the words of the text ; “ Come, ye children, hearken unto me ; I will “ teach you the fear of the Lord.”

THE persons to be taught under this institution are *Children*.

IT is a great happiness that men, in their present state, are not immortal. An evil generation passes away ; and therefore, if proper care be taken, it may be succeeded by a good one. Else were the case of the world lamentable indeed. With old offenders little can be done. Hard labour, spare diet, and, above all, *solitude*, might do something ; and the experiment, it is greatly hoped, will be made. But, in general, if the husbandman has in vain dug about the trees in his garden, and taken every other step necessary for their improvement ; his method must be, to train up younger and better plants, which may answer the end of their plantation, and bear fruit, when the others shall no longer be suffered to cumber the ground.

THE children proposed to be instructed are those of the *poor*.

OF

OF every community, as it has pleased God to ordain in the present constitution of things, the poor must always form a very considerable majority. The necessities of mankind could never else be supplied; for the rich will not labour; but they are constrained to pay those, who, for their own, and the common good, can and will labour. In return for these services, the rich, if they were wise, should do every thing in their power to make and to keep the poor honest, virtuous, and religious; to instruct, or procure them to be instructed, in the knowledge and practice of their duty to God and man; more especially, to set them a proper example. This, I say, would be to act the part of wise men, as well as good men. For when the religious principle is once perished and gone in the poor, human laws will lose their effect, and be set at nought.

I WILL mention a remarkable instance of this, well attested. A servant, who had made the improvement that might be expected from hearing the irreligious and blasphemous conversation continually passing at the table where it was his place to wait,^b took an opportunity to rob his master. Being apprehended, and urged to

^b The table was that of the late Mr. MALLET. The fact is related by DAVIES in his LIFE OF GARRICK, Vol. II, P. 59.

give a reason for this infamous behaviour, " Sir, said
 " he, I had heard you so often talk of the impossibility
 " of a future state, and that after death there was no
 " reward for virtue, nor punishment for vice, that I
 " was tempted to commit the robbery." " Well but,
 " replied the master, had you no fear of that death
 " which the laws of your country inflict upon the
 " crime?" " Sir, rejoined the servant, looking sternly
 " at his master, what is that to you, if I had a mind
 " to venture that? You had removed my greatest ter-
 " ror; why should I fear the less?"

BEHOLD the wisdom of propagating infidelity and
 atheism in a nation! As the middle and lower orders
 of mankind are always ready to imitate the behaviour of
 their betters, this is one woful specimen, among mil-
 lions, of the manner in which the general corruption
 of faith and morals has descended, and infected the
 world. We must now therefore take up the matter at
 the other end, and try, if, by reforming the poor, we
 cannot shame the rich into better manners, and better
 principles. And for our encouragement, in opposition to
 the instance of a master perverting his servant; let us re-
 collect that mentioned in the Scriptures of a female ser-
 vant, who waited on the wife of Naaman, a general officer
 of

of the Syrians, and converted her master to the belief and worship of the God of Israel.^c To the poor the Gospel was at first preached : to the poor let it still be preached : the rich must do as they please ; but, for the promotion of their interest temporal and eternal, they cannot do better, than to believe and practise it, themselves, and to see that every body belonging to them does the same. God defend all masters from free-thinking servants !—and all servants from free-thinking masters !

THE foregoing considerations have been of a more general nature. It is time now to note the peculiarities which distinguish the institution of SUNDAY SCHOOLS, and recommend them to particular notice and encouragement. These have already been set forth to great advantage, by a worthy clergyman in our neighbourhood.^d I have only to draw his arguments to a point, and state them in as concise a manner to you as I am able, adding withal what may have occurred to myself, in the way of confirmation, or illustration.

^c See 2 Kings v. 2.

^d The Reverend Mr. MOORE of Boughton Bleas, in his sermon on the subject, and the excellent and very useful Appendix subjoined to it.

It is to be observed, then, First, that when the managers of all other charitable foundations have done their best, numbers of children must still be left in ignorance, being employed, from morning to evening, during six days of the week, and all little enough, to earn the bread they are to eat. Their case therefore is desperate, unless we contrive to give them on a Sunday that instruction which they can obtain on no other day.

II. By appropriating the charitable fund to the use of Sunday alone, numbers may be comprehended (perhaps all the poor children in a place) who stand in need of such assistance : whereas a very few only could be benefited, at the same expence, for the whole week.

III. SUNDAY being a day of rest from the labour of the hands, from worldly business of all sorts (for such it ought to be among Christians) we are the more at liberty to employ it in the opening of the understanding, and improvement of the heart, which is the proper employment of the day. And blessed are they who do so employ the hours which remain, after the attendance on public worship is over. One of the great lights of the law, in the last century, Lord chief justice Hale, went so far as to say, and has left it upon

B record,

record, in his instructions to his children, that he never failed to experience the kindly influence of a well spent sunday on the business of the succeeding week. He supposed (and I know of no good reason to be given why we should suppose otherwise) that, by the devout exercises of such a sunday, the mind and the temper were formed and prepared to encounter the fatigues and difficulties which might occur; as also, that the favour of heaven was a natural consequence of having kept it's commandments. Give me leave therefore to take this opportunity of intreating you to consider, whether the face of things would not be very soon, and very much altered for the better among us, if each master of a family should resolve to institute a kind of SUNDAY SCHOOL (if I may so speak) in his own house, and dedicate the evening of the Lord's day to the instruction of his children and his servants in matters of religion. I am not pleading for a Jewish or a puritanical sabbath; for a four face, or an ill temper.* But it seems reasonable, that one evening, at least, out of seven, should be given to this good and necessary work, and that sunday evening

* On the design of the Christian sabbath, and the proper manner of observing it, see a very sensible letter in the supplement to the Gentleman's Magazine for the year 1785, P. 1020.

should

should be fixed upon ; for unless some time be fixed upon, the work will never be done at all. A man may live fifty years, perhaps, without once recollecting, that it is his duty to take this care of the household over which it has pleased God to place him.

IV. BY a SUNDAY SCHOOL a number of children are kept out of harm's way ; they are collected together, and inured to early and regular habits of attendance on God's worship ; they are instructed in what is right ; they are enabled to employ well their leisure hours, when they grow up ; and teach others after them to do the same. Let me say, that these are very great points gained indeed ! For though the observation be trite, it is true, and cannot be too often repeated ; that most of those unhappy wretches, who suffer for their crimes, when they come to confession, charge their destruction upon the manner in which in the days of their youth they mispent sunday, while their neighbours were at church. And how can it be otherwise. What wonder that they should turn out bad, who constantly missed the opportunities (the only ones, it may be, which they had) of becoming good ? The thing speaks itself. And in confirmation of what was said above respecting families, let it here be added, that more young people of either sex,

servants especially, are ruined by being permitted to wander abroad, instead of being well employed at home on a Sunday evening, than on any other. The reason again is plain ; because on that evening, for want of the discipline in families above recommended, there is a far greater number of idle young people stirring, whose sole business it is to seduce and corrupt one another. Thus is the holiest of days, beyond any other, polluted and profaned !—" If the light that is in thee be darkness, " how great is that darkness ! "

V. THE children of the poor, by being drawn out of their obscurity into notice and protection, are humanized and civilized. They are equally surprised and pleased, on finding themselves thus regarded, and quickly become different creatures. Their pastor has an opportunity of visiting, addressing them according to their capacities, examining them, commending and rewarding the good and diligent, and reproving those that misbehave themselves. In these circumstances, he is always sure of being attended to with reverence and respect, and every thing he says will be minded. To form early in young minds a proper disposition towards their spiritual father and teacher, is a great acquisition, which must be productive of the best consequences, and would
often

often prevent some of the worst evils with which we are troubled.

LASTLY, let it be considered (for though the consideration be of a less noble kind, it is by no means to be omitted) that by the principles of honesty and industry, instilled into them, these children will be disposed, in future, to provide for themselves and their families, the number of paupers will be diminished, and that heavy burthen of poor's rates lightened, which now threatens to overwhelm and crush the nation.

It is hard to conceive a scheme which promises more benefits to the community. And wherever it has been tried, the expectation has been answered. Children have pressed to be admitted; when admitted, they have made due improvement; and, in some instances, have, ere long, commenced masters, and been found teaching other children at home, what themselves had learned at school.

AT first, it was imagined, that what was learned only on one day of the week, must needs be forgotten before that day came again. The objection seemed plausible, but the event has shewn that it wanted solidity. Impressions

fions made on one sunday have been found to remain on the following sunday. We are not in general aware, how much may be done by a few hours in a week constantly employed on the same subject, especially where there is a willing mind.

NOR let us be discouraged, though our endeavours may not succeed equally with all. What endeavours ever did so? What gift of God has not been bestowed on some persons in vain? Rain falls on barren sandy deserts; but what would become of us, if none were therefore to fall on our fields and gardens? They must become deserts too. Nothing can be more trifling than this objection.

ANOTHER has been advanced in some of the public prints, though you will scarcely think it credible, namely, that they who teach the children are guilty of sabbath-breaking, because they work on that day for hire. Then the ministers of religion throughout the christian world are verily guilty of sabbath-breaking; since they are paid for teaching. Were they not so paid, and had they no other means of getting their bread, they must all be starved.

SUCH

SUCH are the objections which have been hitherto produced against the institution of SUNDAY SCHOOLS. If no better can be produced, it must be said, that, for all which appears, they are worthy of universal encouragement. To encourage them is to forward the great design of the Gospel, in a case which seems to admit no other method of doing it. It is done with ease; for one person can instruct many children : and it is done at an expense which is a mere trifle, compared with the expenses daily incurred in ways which afford no real comfort to the mind, on the recollection.

THE institution solicits and implores, above all, the patronage and assistance of the clergy, under whose direction and superintendence, it should, if possible, be carried on. May we live to see the time, when the laudable example now before our eyes shall be followed in every parish throughout the kingdom ! Grateful surely must it be to angels as well as men, to behold those children behaving with reverence and devotion in the house of God, who might otherwise have been committing acts of violence or fraud, without ; to hear the praises of the world's Creator and Redeemer proceeding from mouths, which might have been pouring forth a torrent of blasphemy, or obscenity ; to find a love of
their

their duty and of their business implanted in hearts, where a love of idleness and of mischief might have taken up its abode for ever. He who does not rejoice at the prospect of such a change as this, will have difficulty in discovering, why the tidings of a Saviour's birth were declared by the angel, who as at this season announced them, to be tidings of joy. "Thou shalt call his name JESUS, for he shall save his people"—from what?—"from their SINS." To see children therefore wandering in darkness, ignorant of God and of Christ, reprobate to every good work, and every notion of good; and to continue idle spectators of such a scene, without making those exertions which it is in our power to make—this can never be right in any of us, clergy or laity; but must contribute much to the weight of that charge, which shall one day be brought against us. On the contrary, to succour those who are thus distressed for want of spiritual aid; to preserve little children in a state of innocence, or reclaim them from one of error and vice, by leading them in the ways of truth and holiness; these—says one, who has spent his life in the service of mankind, readily and zealously giving his countenance and his assistance to every scheme of piety and charity that in a long course of years has been set afoot among us, and to whom many of them

owe

owe their original ^f— “ These are imperial works, and
 “ worthy the immediate disciples of our Lord ;” to
 whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, three
 Persons, and one God, be ascribed, as is most due, all
 blessing and honour, and glory and power, might, ma-
 jesty, and dominion, now and ever. Amen.

^f JONAS HANWAY, Esq.

owe their originality to the fact that they are
worthy of the immediate disciples of our Lord; to
witness with the Father and the Holy Spirit, the
Father and the Son, he is glorified as he works in all
things, and his power and glory, might and
glory, and dominion, now and ever, Amen.

APPENDIX

A P P E N D I X.

Many who wish to establish SUNDAY SCHOOLS may be at a loss as to the steps necessary to be taken for that purpose. I therefore requested from some Gentlemen, in whose hands such schools have prospered to their satisfaction, an account of the manner in which they had proceeded, descending to the most minute particulars. In other cases this might be thought tedious; in the present I am certain it will be found useful: indeed, the novelty of the institution renders it necessary.

N^o. I.

Extract of a letter from the Reverend Mr. HEARNE, Rector of the united parishes of St. Alphage and St. Mary Northgate, Canterbury.

YOU desire, Sir, as minute an account as possible of my schools — After consulting a person who knew much of the poor here, I went round my united parishes, to learn who were willing to send their children to be taught, and found my people very ready to accept my offer: at the same time I left a *Christian monitor* at every house. About 120 children were collected. As both my parishes abound with poor, Northgate especially, which is poverty itself, I told my

parishioners, when I declared my intention of erecting these schools, that I asked nothing from them on this occasion, but their countenance and influence. I directly provided books, and three men and one woman, to take care of and teach these children. The pay of these teachers, as also of the clerk, who has been since engaged, is one shilling each for the day. They receive other civilities. The principal silk manufacturer gave 2s. 6d. to each of these five persons. The children appeared at St. Alphage church, on sunday January 23. 1785, very ragged and very disorderly. You will not be surprized at this, when you are told, that some of them, perhaps, were never in a church since they were baptized; but usually spent their sabbath, in playing, cursing and swearing, in pilfering, or in some other mischief. —These schools were at first kept at three different places, and have all been visited by me on every sunday, (except one, when I was at Exeter) from the beginning of them to this time. I have now all the children together in the chapel of St. John's hospital, under my own eye; for I find by experience, that unless one or more persons constantly superintend these schools, no good is to be expected from them. For some considerable time, I have been at the chapel exactly by nine o'clock, the time when the school begins, and have continued there till eleven, the time we go to church together. In the morning, while the teachers are instructing the little ones, I take 30 or 40 of the most forward into the chapel chancel, and hear them read the psalms, collects, the epistle and gospel, and second lesson for the day; and if we have time, other chapters. Whatever occurs in our reading, that is remarkable, or tends to their edification, is taken notice of, and explained to them. At half an hour after one, we meet at school again, and continue there till half past two, the time for church. At this time, the little ones are taught and repeat their catechism, or the questions in the end of the spelling books, for the instruction of children, &c. We read the New Testament, as before, till the clerk comes to sing a psalm or two with them. After church, we all return to school. The little ones are employed, as in the morning, in spelling, or reading

ing, or repeating prayers or hymns. At this time, I examine the most forward, and explain to them the catechism, and the use of the common prayer book. I exercise them in repeating after me the Lord's prayer, and the creeds, and all the responses. All this they do in a very decent and proper manner. We have gone through likewise, *Fox, on public worship*, and his *Introduction*, &c. And also, with Crossman's *Introduction* &c. *The church catechism, broken into short questions*, and Mann's catechism. The books in common use are *the child's first book*, 1st and 2d parts, Fisher or Dixon's spelling book, the Catechisms before mentioned, particularly Mann's; *divine songs* of the pious and excellent Dr. Watts; and every child is furnished with a common prayer and testament to carry to church, when they can use them. 50 of Unwin's *Sin and danger*, &c. and 50 of Stonehouse's *religious instructions* are given to 100 children, who after a time *exchange* with each other. Thus 50 tracts will serve 100 children. They have likewise Stonehouse's *prayers*. I take children of all ages, from 5 or 6 to 16 or 17. It is best to begin with them early. Some time since, two lads, the one my parishioner, the other of the next parish, were condemned to death, for house breaking. The melancholy event was taken notice of by me on the Sunday following, and the children sang *the lamentation of a sinner*. This performance of Children, some of whom, if no care had been taken of them, might have been in the same dreadful situation, had a wonderful effect upon every one who heard them. This accident led me to think, that as much psalmody as was necessary for divine worship, would be useful and pleasing both to the children and congregation. I therefore engaged the clerk, who is a sober serious man, to give these children a little instruction, which he does on one or two evenings in a week. Mr. Flacton, whose name is well known as a teacher and composer of music, is a benefactor to these children, and likewise condescends to give them some assistance; he has set to music some of Dr. Watt's songs, Addison on providence, &c. which they perform so well, as to be heard with pleasure.

ABOUT

ABOUT 100 of these children are sent to school *every day* for one or two hours, as they can be spared from spinning wool, or winding filk, at one penny per head, per week; the usual pay for such instruction. This is of great service to them. I have picked out 4 little girls to learn to work, and pay for them with money that has been entrusted with me for such purposes. I have gone through the book of psalms with some of the elder girls, and am going through it a second time, at my house, where they, for one hour every day, are instructed—Some few boys from other schools attend my Sunday school. Such are the advantages that my children have enjoyed, and they have profited by them as much as could be expected. They are greatly civilized, as to their behaviour; and gave satisfaction when they were examined in the church. The little ones repeated prayers, hymns, &c. the great ones gave proper answers to questions which contained the substance of the church catechism, but not put in the words of the catechism. The little ones in general come on very well. One little fellow, who is only 6 years and 4 months old, read to me with justness and propriety, Fox's *introduction*, a book he had never seen before. This child has had no instruction but from this school, and from his parents at home, who are poor people. Parents, if they have goodness in them, will be induced to do all they can for their own children, when they find so much done for them by others—I think myself in duty bound to mention some circumstances, that shew the reputation of the school, and reflect great honour upon the persons I shall mention. A stranger, who was at this church, was so well pleased with the institution, that he gave a guinea for me to apply as I should think proper. A neighbour, who is a quaker, offered to subscribe, if the schools had been supported by contribution. Another parishioner, who is a dissenting teacher, gave me money for the use of the children. A charitable lady, who lives a few miles from Canterbury, sent me a noble present of 5 guineas; and some other ladies and gentlemen, both in and out of the parish, have been very liberal to these children, and to their parents, who wanted relief.

lief. Many of these children, who were almost naked, have been clothed by some benevolent persons. My friend Mr. Byrch, (who has done much on the occasion) with two other worthy gentlemen, the principal supporters of the weekly schools, have been of great service to me, not only by their money, but by their constant visits to the schools. One of these gentlemen, who was a surgeon and apothecary, is ready to assist any of them in the way of his profession, as well as by any other act of kindness. My 3d colleague, who is a captain of a man of war, has been a great benefactor to these children, and to some of their families. One very great advantage of Sunday schools is, that they afford every minister an opportunity of giving to the children of the poor instructions in the plain and important principles of religion; of bringing them to church, where they are under his eye, and under the eyes of their benefactors, who may take proper notice of their good or bad behaviour. My children are very narrowly watched; and no instance of improper behaviour is passed over, without a solemn and severe rebuke. If they are disorderly, they partake of no benefaction intended for good children; and if this treatment will not reclaim them, they are expelled. When I find any of them guilty of lying, the whole school is called together, and I read to them a little book called *An exercise against lying*, concluding with the prayer at the end.—Such are the regulations that have been observed in my schools; which gentlemen may adopt, or vary, according to their particular local circumstances. It is very evident to multitudes by facts (which are better than a thousand arguments) that this institution has been attended with many beneficial effects. I have heard of persons, no friends to religion, who have supported these schools; and they are, in my opinion, no bad politicians; for our lives and fortunes will not be less safe, because our servants, and the lower people in general, have been instructed in a religion that commands them, under the severest penalty, to hurt nobody by word or deed. I suppose every magistrate, when a young offender is brought before him for theft, &c. gives him some good advice. Would not
good

good advice given by his minister to him, *before* he became hardened, be more likely to prove effectual. If ever a reformation be brought about in this kingdom, it will be by the labours and diligence of the parochial clergy, each in his parish. If our law-makers would endeavour, by these schools, and by setting a better example themselves, to reform men, they would shew more wisdom, than by any mode of punishment they can inflict on them for being wicked. I sincerely wish, that by the blessing of God, this institution of Mr. RAIKES, (a name that every clergyman, especially those of his own city and neighbourhood, should highly reverence) may universally prevail, and produce the best effects.

N^o. II.

Extract of a letter from the Reverend Mr. MOORE, of
Boughton Blean, near Canterbury.

HAVING heard, Sir, through Mr. Hearne, that you intend to favour the public with your sermon, preached in St. Alphage church on the subject of Sunday schools; and that you thought it might be serviceable to subjoin an appendix, containing practical information, together with any other matter, that might tend to encourage and promote the institution; I hope you will excuse the liberty I am about to take of sending you an entire copy of a letter, which I had the honour of receiving sometime ago from the Bishop of Clonfort, which perhaps it may not be unacceptable to you to peruse, and which is perfectly at your service, to make use of as you may think proper.

“DEAR SIR,

“THOUGH I had not the pleasure of receiving your very interesting discourse on Sunday schools, at the time you intended, I have since got it, and read it with the greatest satisfaction. It is an admirable defence and recommendation of this new institution, which I hope will become daily more general, and produce the best moral effects, by impressing the children of the poor with a sense of duty and religion at the only time and age when they are capable of impressions. A poor man's creed need not be long; but it should be struck in early, and be a true and right one. If he believe, as the common proverb says, that he is to die like a dog, he will undoubtedly live like one. The communication of education is certainly a very great blessing to the poor; and had Mandeville, and they, who to serve political purposes, are for denying all instruc-

D

tion

"tion to the lower classes, only pushed their arguments far enough,
 "they might have proved, that they had a right to maim or put out
 "the eyes of the common people, in order to make them more ma-
 "nageable and more in the power of their superiors. Having never
 "seen the paragraph in the English papers concerning me, to which
 "you allude in your appendix, I can say nothing to it; but what I
 "have endeavoured to do in my diocese, ever since my first appoint-
 "ment, is this. There are twenty catholics to one protestant in it.
 "To attempt their conversion, or to think of making them read pro-
 "testant books, would be in vain. I have therefore circulated amongst
 "them some of the best of their own authors, particularly one Gother,
 "whose writings contain much pure Christianity, useful knowledge,
 "and benevolent sentiments. He wrote 18 little volumes of religi-
 "ous tracts, and died about the year 1696.— Unable to make the
 "peasants about me good protestants, I wish to make them good
 "catholics, good citizens, good any thing. I have established too a
 "sunday school, open to both protestants and catholics, at my residence
 "in the country, have recommended the scheme to my clergy, and
 "hope to have several on foot in the summer. Pastoral works, how-
 "ever, of this nature go on very heavily in a kingdom so unsettled,
 "and so intoxicated with politics as this is. I return you my best
 "thanks for your very obliging present."

It may not be unsatisfactory to you, Sir, to be informed, (as my
 parishes lie so near Canterbury) that my schools go on as well, as
 (all local circumstances considered) could in reason be expected. A
 number of children from 7 to 14 years of age, attend regularly at
 church and school, many of whom (it was to be feared) from the ig-
 norance and ill example of their parents, would never have been seen
 within the walls of the former perhaps their lives through. They
 continue to behave, on the whole, with much propriety and decency,
 so that there is great reason to hope, that a great number of them
 will essentially profit by the instruction that is held out to them. I
 cannot forbear relating a circumstance that has struck me on this oc-
 casion,

caſion, becauſe it ſhews the awful impreſſion of virtue, even on thoſe minds, where it's practice has been conſtantly obſcured by a train of evil courſes. Many parents of poor children, who themſelves were never in the habit of going to church (nor can be perſuaded to it) and who ſet evil examples in every ſhape to their children, are yet very deſirous of having thoſe children partake of the advantages of theſe ſchools, and are among the foremoſt to make them regular in their attendance at church, &c. I have alſo had "voluntary" ſubſcriptions offered by thoſe, to whom, conſidering their total neglect of, and ſeeming contempt for, all religious duties, I thought it abſolutely uſeleſs to apply. Much, however, of the happy progreſs of this affair muſt depend on the aſſiduity of the parochial clergy, who muſt be conſidered (as their duty requires they ſhould conſider themſelves) as the chief labourers in this, and every harveſt, where the fruits of virtue and religion are to be collected in their pariſhes. A ſuperintendance of theſe ſchools is neceſſary, and alſo a degree of explanatory inſtruction, for which the common teachers that are to be hired even in towns, but eſpecially in villages, are totally unqualified. That clergyman therefore is peculiarly fortunate, who meets with ſuch reſpectable laymen in his pariſh, as are willing to aſſiſt him in theſe chriſtian labours, not only with their purſe, but by ſharing the cares of ſuperintendance with him. Where this is the caſe, all goes on cheerfully and happily, and with a ſuperior progreſs in improvement, as I myſelf ſenſibly experience in one of my pariſhes. For however deſirous a private clergyman may be of eſtabliſhing ſuch inſtitutions, yet the reſpective diſtances of his churches (I ſpeak of country pariſhes) of his ſchools, of his own habitation, from each other, together with the full ſervice to be performed by him twice in the day, make it impracticable for want of time (however willing he might be) to viſit his little ſeminaries ſo often or for ſo long a time together as he could wiſh: but yet, with theſe difficulties, much good may be done by the willing labourer, though not ſo much perhaps as he himſelf could deſire.

N^o. III.

Extract of a letter from the reverend Mr. PARSONS,
of Wye near Faversham, Kent.

IMMEDIATELY on the publication of Mr. Moore's sermon and appendix, I resolved, attempted, and was so happy as to succeed in my attempt, to set on foot a Sunday school in my parish of Wye. By the generosity of my neighbours, I raised an effectual subscription; and before I began the school, went to such of the poor as had children which might reap the benefit, and informed them of what was intended, adding that I expected, and indeed earnestly desired, that they would send their children. The poor people thankfully and readily assented. I agreed with four persons, two masters and two mistresses, for their constant attendance, and engaged the assistance of two worthy neighbours, to whom I *chose* to shew the account of the expenditure of the money. On Sunday the 4th of September 1785, my school began, and I had the pleasure of seeing the teachers attended to church by a *hundred and four children*. You will easier conceive, Sir, than I can express my feelings on the occasion. Duty and inclination induced me to deliver a sermon, the earnestness and sincerity of which were increased by the sight of so many innocents before me, candidates for heaven—But forgive me; I am got into sentiments, when I should dwell upon facts. These I will arrange according to the method you have mentioned in your letter;—Stipends—age—times—books—progress and other particulars.

STIPENDS.

Each of the teachers is allowed a shilling a day, and they are regularly paid every quarter.

A G E.

A G E.

We admit children at seven years of age, and dismiss them at fourteen.

T I M E S.

Children come to the school room an hour before church in the morning, and again the same in the afternoon. After service they return to school, and stay two hours. In the times before service, the chief employment is finding psalms, collects, &c. — and after the service in the evening, two hours are employed in reading and instruction.

B O O K S.

Prayer books—Testaments—Crossman's *Introduction to the Christian religion*; and, for the youngest children, a little book from *the society for promoting Christian knowledge*, entitled the *child's first book*.

P R O G R E S S.

In regard to the progress made, it must be various: but I have the pleasure to say, we perceive a visible advantage in behaviour and in learning, of which the parents and the inhabitants gratefully speak.

O T H E R P A R T I C U L A R S

Must be given as they arise. The teachers have each of them a paper of written instructions given them as to their method. A fair copy of *rules and orders* is hung up in the school room, and read once a month. A prayer (from Mr Moore's appendix) is read by one of the children in the morning at entrance, and in the evening at dismissal. — The names are called over regularly, morning and evening, and absences marked in the manner of a college chapel bill, and given to me. I visit them occasionally, but make a point to attend once in a month in the evening, and examine the elder children in a portion of Crossman, for which they are expected

to

to prepare. Nothing further than reading and the first principles of the christian religion is thought of, or intended; and humility, as the duty of their lowly station, is cheerfully inculcated. To this purpose, I wrote and printed a little address to the parents and children, which I dispersed among them, and I hope with good effect. This little tract Mr. Moore and Mr. Hearne (to whom I am much obliged) have dispersed in their respective schools.

ON the sundays when I examine them, I read a prayer composed for the purpose, at their dismissal. The children are divided into classes, according to their age and abilities. The New Testament (particularly the 5th, 6th and 7th of St Matthew, the first of St. John, and the 12th and 13th of the Romans) with Crossman, are read by the higher children. At the age of 14, when any are dismissed, they have a present *publicly* made them of a *Crossman*, with their name, &c. written in it. Every child has in it's hand a printed morning and evening prayer on pasteboard, to follow the reader. Each teacher has a regular number allotted to his, or her care; and they take the higher and lower alternately. The boys and girls, though in the same room, are separated; and the men always teach the boys; the women, the girls. In winter, the school room, hired for the purpose, is the place; in summer, the church. My parish is large and straggling; yet I have the satisfaction to say, that, notwithstanding the severity of the winter, the attendance has been large; generally, between 80 and 90.

RULES AND ORDERS for the TEACHERS; of which each teacher is furnished with a copy.

I.

In the morning and afternoon, let the psalms and collects be found by, or for, every child who has a prayer book.

II. When

II.

When that is done, let the time be employed in reading the service in the prayer book, till they are to go to church.

III.

In the evening, let the classes be taken in order. Hear them in their turns such lessons as you have given them. Let the children stand up regularly before you.

IV.

Let the lessons be principally, for the higher classes, Crossman: for the next in order, the New Testament; and I recommend the 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters of St. Matthew, the first of St. John, and the 12th and 13th of Romans, to be chiefly read.—For the others, the little books.

V.

When this is done, you may employ them in catechising or otherwise; but let the regular classes and lessons be gone through, and every child be heard to read, before any thing else is done.

VI.

As little severity to be used as possible: yet, if it is necessary, that little must be used.

VII.

The teachers to observe the children that misbehave at church, and punish them when they return into the school: not in the church, because it disturbs the congregation.

VIII.

On the first sunday in every month, let the *rules and orders* be read by one of the masters in turns, before teaching begins in the evening, when all are settled together.

IX.

About ten minutes before it is time to dismiss them, let the teachers gather the books; go to the children for them, and not suffer a child to get out of it's seat to bring them; for that makes a noise and confusion.

X.

This method I must desire the teachers to observe ; as order and regularity are the life and soul of instruction.

RULES AND ORDERS for the Children.

I.

Every child must be in school by or before ten in the morning, every Sunday : and in the afternoon, by or before half an hour after one in winter, and by or before two in summer.

II.

No child shall remove out of place without leave of the master or mistress ; nor play, nor talk, nor whisper, upon any account.

III.

Every child who lives in the street, and whose parent desires leave of absence for the child, shall bring the *numbered ticket* to the school, give it to the master or mistress, and at the same time shall give the reason for which leave of absence is asked.

IV.

If any child be guilty of lying, swearing, or speaking indecent words, such child shall be privately reprov'd for the first offence ; for the second, be publicly reprov'd before the whole school ; and for the third time, shall not be suffered to come to the school again, till he or she makes earnest promise of amendment.

V.

These orders shall hang up in the school room, and be read to the children by one of the masters on the first Sunday in every month.

N. B. The expression, *the Numbered Ticket*, in the 3d Article, alludes to the method taken to prevent absences on frivolous occasions. The name of every child is written on a pasteboard ticket, numbered. These tickets I distributed amongst the families, according to the number of children in each, desiring the parents to send them agreeable to the direction in the article : and to this method, I believe, is greatly owing the regular and large attendance we have had through the winter.

I should add, that though fourteen years of age is the time of dismissal, yet if a child wishes and is desirous to stay, such child is encouraged and permitted to stay some months longer, or even till fifteen.

N^o. IV.

Extract of a letter from JAMES SIX, Esq. of Canterbury.

HAVING heard with great pleasure of the success which attended the Sunday schools at Gloucester under the direction of the benevolent Mr. Raikes, their first founder, and animated by the example of my respectable friend Mr. Hearne, I resolved, by the assistance of a few friends, to attempt something of the same kind in the parish of Holy Cross, Westgate, where I live.

Our first step was to visit every house in the parish where we might expect to find children likely to be benefited by our undertaking; and we had the pleasure to receive grateful acknowledgements from most of their parents on the occasion. We provided a master for the boys, and a mistress for the girls; rooms with necessary accommodations, books, &c. And on the 3d of April 1785, sixty children, of whom about thirty were boys, and the rest girls, clean in their persons, and as decent in their apparel as their humble stations would permit, made their appearance at church, with their teachers, for the first time. Their number is since increased to about fourscore; and except two or three, that are elder, they are most of them between eight and fourteen years of age.

On Sundays, about two hours before the morning service begins, they meet at the schools: as soon as they are assembled, their teachers read a morning prayer, and the children sing an hymn; and being divided into classes according to their ages, or improvements, the first class is examined in the catechism, while the second is engaged with the spelling books; then these, in their turn, are taught to repeat the catechism, while the former learn the collect of the day to repeat it by heart to their teacher in the afternoon; and after having attended the forenoon service at church, they return again in order to the schools, whence they are dismissed.

They meet there again about two hours before the evening service. The teachers then begin reading in succession with them the several verses of psalms or chapters: the children who are not able to join in this exercise are in the mean time assisted to read in their spelling books, by those among the boys and girls best qualified for that purpose. They afterwards sing a psalm, or two, as a necessary preparation to their joining in the same with the congregation at church. After having attended the evening service, they return again with their teachers to the school rooms, and are employed, for

about an hour, in repeating the collects which they learned in the day, and psalms, or hymns learned in the preceding week ; or in completing any part of the task of the day wherein they may happen to be deficient.

THE youngest children are then dismissed ; and those which remain, boys as well as girls, assemble in the same room ; where I have the pleasure of spending about a couple of hours with them, in the most agreeable manner, every sunday evening.

My first enquiry commonly is, who amongst them all can give the best account of the sermon they heard that day at church, and I take occasion to admonish them in any part of their duty to which it may happen to apply : in this, as well as in most other things, they shew, in general, a spirit of laudable emulation. Sometimes I reason with them on the nature of the church service ; the proper method of accompanying every part of it with reverence and devotion, as described in their prayer books ; at other times, I read with, and hear them read, or repeat, in a proper manner, psalms, or hymns, which they have been directed to learn ; ask them questions ; explain to them the catechism ; direct them to apply those parts to their own proper use, which more particularly belong to their years and station ; bestowing praise where it is due, and reproof where it is necessary. Within these few months, psalmody (of which the children are very fond) has likewise engaged our attention ; this not only enables them to join with the congregation in that pleasing part of the church service, but also induces others to do so too. After therefore practising in this way as long as our time will permit, they conclude with singing an evening hymn ; a prayer is then read, and they are dismissed : and though we have sometimes accidentally remained at the school an hour longer than the usual time, I never saw the children shew the least desire to be gone, but rather expressed a reluctance at parting. In the same manner I spend about two hours with them of an evening in the middle of the week ; and by the frequency and familiarity of my conversation, have so gained upon their affections, that they pay the greatest attention, and respect, to what I say to them. All those children who have no other means of learning to read, attend the mistress about an hour every day for that purpose, at a time which is most convenient for their friends, and for their several employments. This regulation is found necessary, because the opportunity, which the sundays afford to the children who cannot read at all, is not alone sufficient to forward those,

who have every thing to learn, so expeditiously as could be wished : besides, as about 40 of them visit the mistress daily, they thereby acquire regular habits of attending to what is good ; learning prayers, psalms, hymns, &c. and the mistress, who is a very good woman, extremely well qualified for the purpose, and living in the midst of them, has a continual opportunity of watching over their conduct, and is always ready to admonish them, as occasion may require.

THE benefit arising from the prosecution of our plan appears from the following facts. Above twenty children, most of whom at their first coming were unacquainted with the alphabet, have been already so far instructed, as to make use of their prayer books in every part of the church service ; the greater part of them, but for this opportunity, would probably never have been taught to read at all : others have been greatly improved ; and those children who go to other weekly schools advance faster by coming amongst us, and imbibing the spirit of emulation which universally prevails ; to which psalmody, of however little importance at first it might seem, has greatly contributed ; for by frequently singing together, the children not only contract a fondness for each other, but also become zealous for promoting the honour and reputation of the whole body : it likewise recommends them to the notice and approbation of the publick ; than which nothing can be a stronger incitement to a laudable emulation for excelling, not only in that particular, but also in every thing else that is praise-worthy. Their general good behaviour gives us great encouragement ; for most of them, even those who had the worst characters, and were of the most unruly disposition, are considerably altered for the better. In the service at church they read the psalms, repeat the responses, join in the prayers with decency and propriety ; and being desirous that they should join with the congregation in every part of the service, singing of psalms not excepted, as they were deprived of the assistance of persons better qualified to teach them, I attempted it myself, and by means of a German flute, and one of the girls, who on my first essay I observed to have a good voice, and an exceeding good ear, succeeded beyond my expectation. Hence it will appear that the children sing, not in different parts, but in unison with the congregation ; which was what I desired.

A NUMBER of children, whose voices are naturally sweet, singing together in proper time and tune, cannot but have a pleasing effect; which is greatly increased by this consideration, that many of those poor innocents, from a state of the greatest ignorance and stupidity, on the brink of being swallowed up in vice and prophaneness, are now seen employing, with delight to themselves and pleasure to all that hear them, one of the most excellent gifts their beneficent Creator has bestowed on them, in singing his praise. That their understandings may accompany their voices, they are often directed to read, and consider the sense of what they sing; that by the most pleasing and engaging means, their minds may be made susceptible of devotion.

AND now, I must in a more particular manner express my obligations to those friends whom I mentioned in the former part of my letter; one of them, who is the church-warden, visits the school frequently, before the morning and afternoon service: his presence, particularly in the boys school, contributes greatly to maintain that respect which is due to the master. He treated them all with a plentiful dinner on Christmas day at his own expence, and is always ready to do them every good office in his power.

ANOTHER very good friend has been so kind as to take upon him the office of treasurer; paying the master and mistress their weekly allowance; providing every thing that may be at any time necessary; assisting me in very essential matters, from the very first beginning of our undertaking; and being ever ready to give his assistance, whenever it is wanted.

AND lastly, an intimate acquaintance, although he has not taken a more active part, has nevertheless greatly promoted the schools by considerable contribution, as well as by the very early inclination he expressed in their favour.

By the united help of these my good friends and neighbours, who have assisted personally, as well as by subscriptions; and other benevolent persons, who have done the same by contributions, are these schools, under the blessing of divine providence, in a flourishing state at present, and, from the assurance of every kind of support, likely so to continue.

OUR present worthy clergyman, to whom this living has very lately been presented, has declared himself a warm advocate for this undertaking, and is ready to assist us to the utmost in every thing we may desire.

F I N I S